

### The Navarre, a.k.a. Paris II Beatus.

The map now known as the *Navarra* or *Paris II Beatus mappa mundi* presents a very different approach that is confusing when compared with the other Beatus derivative *mappae mundi*. The name of this *mappa mundi* is due to the fact that traditionally a Navarrese or Gascon origin has been attributed to it. Despite this, it has also been suggested that it was produced in the area of La Rioja, or influenced by a work from that region, and moreover, due to the importance conferred upon *Astorga* in the *mappa mundi*, it has been proposed that it was created there, or at a scriptorium belonging to that diocese—an idea on which Sandra Sáenz-López Pérez concurs in her book, based on the iconographic interpretation of *Astorga*.

The orientation of the map is strange. A major departure from the other Beatus *mappae mundi* derivatives and most European early medieval maps, the *Navarre/Paris II mappa mundi* places South at the top, vice East on all the others, suggesting possibly an Arabic influence. The legends on both sides imply that the map is oriented with South at the top, but the layout, the waterways and various other topographic features indicate that it is in fact oriented with East at the top, where also *Earthly Paradise* lies. It is also possible that the copier has made an error and reversed the inscriptions of *Oriens* and *Occidents* at the two extremities of the map. Due to this error and ambiguous orientation, most countries and provinces seem grossly misplaced.

Despite the organic and coherent nature of the *mappae mundi* found in the Beatus codices, attributes to which Gonzalo Menendez-Pidal and Carlos Cid Priego refer, a detailed comparison highlights numerous similarities among and differences between these maps. Because of these, the cartographic corpus of the Beatus can be subdivided into families or groups which, in turn, coincide with the groupings within which the Beatus codices have been organized, based on the artistic analysis of the manuscripts: *Family I*, the oldest, pertaining to the editions of Beatus himself of 776 (*Family Ia*) and of 784 (*Family Ib*), and *Families IIab*, derived from the posthumous edition of ca. 940. The names we use to refer to the *mappae mundi*, as well as the manuscripts to which they belong, are related to their place of origin, to the addressees of the codices, or to the place in which they are currently preserved. As a reference, this map falls into Wilhelm Neuss' *Family I* stemma that organized the Beatus *mappae mundi* into related "families". The Beatus *Family I* comprises the following maps:

- *Mappa mundi of Saint-Sever* (third quarter of the 11<sup>th</sup> century) #207.13.
- *Mappa mundi of El Burgo de Osma* (1086) #207.14.
- *Mappa mundi of Milan* (late 12<sup>th</sup> century or beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup>) #207.26.
- *Mappa mundi of Navarre* (late twelfth century) #207.23.
- *Mappa mundi of Lorvão* (1189) #207.22. Only half of the map survives, specifically the recto folio which relates to Africa with the fourth part of the world and the south of Asia. The map is badly bound into the codex, appearing in inverted form, in other words, with the west in the upper section.
- Mural *mappa mundi* from the church of the monastery of San Pedro de Rocas in Orense (middle or late 12<sup>th</sup> century). This monastery, founded originally as a hermitage and carved out of the rock of a hillside, has been linked with the diocese of Astorga due to its hermit-related history. Sadly, the mural map is in a very bad state of preservation and only some fragments are visible, based on which Serafin Moralejo Alvarez partially reconstructed the map.

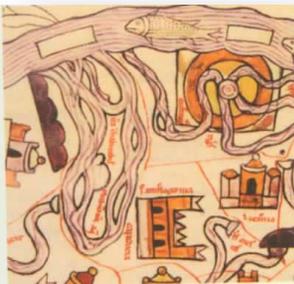
Besides the fact that all these five maps belong to *Family I*, we could propose that perhaps their shared features are explained either by the fact that they all pertained to

the diocese of Astorga, or due to their geographic proximity to it, or to being linked to the cartography produced there, by means of such routes as the Way of St James leading to Santiago. Furthermore, it is important to mention that this subgroup within *Family I*, comprising the maps of *El Burgo de Osma*, *Milan*, *Navarre*, *Lorvão* and *San Pedro de Rocas*, corresponds with the *Family Ib* of the manuscripts of the Beatus codices, which derived from the second edition of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* by Beatus of Liebana produced in 784.

In the *Saint-Sever* and *Navarre* maps the cardinal points are shown by means of caption strips and the winds appear in a written form in the first of these (all twelve winds), or illustrated in the second one (eight of them).

The *Navarre mappa mundi* places Palestine in the interior of Africa and southern Italy next to Jerusalem. It makes this substitution with such inconsistency, in regard to other parts of the map, that it is clear that the copyist is departing from his original. The principle towns, represented by drawings of castles and cathedrals, dominate the map's appearance. Many of the cities in the *Navarre* map represented by architectural drawings, have a space for a caption box to be used for a name, but some are left blank. The traditional fish 'swim' the oceans and are drawn with scales, without the appearance of boats; and a total of 29 islands are displayed. None of these "islands" are identified with labels, instead it seems to use them as a way of writing the name of the *mare Magnum*, *mare Rubrum*, and *mare Tib[eridis]*, although perhaps these are not islands but caption boxes.

The two circles at the left of the map depicting the sun and the moon are also unique features. The black and white circle is the moon and the red and orange, the sun. It is also noteworthy that although the world is divided into four parts. Europe is allocated two quarters of the map. The result is that the map only shows the three continents and completely omits the unknown fourth continent, present in all other Beatus *mappae mundi* derivatives. Yet, like the *El Burgos de Osma Beatus mappa mundi*, the *Navarre* represents the *sciapod* (the single legged man) who is usually shown inside the fourth continent of Beatus *mappae mundi*, is nevertheless present here too, clothed and sitting in the top right (southeastern) corner of the map.



The map of *Navarre* includes in the far northwest of the world a region flooded of water, left as deserted and uninhabitable. Numerous aqueous channels emanating from the encircling ocean cross over forming small islets. However, on these islands there is no possibility of habitation, as highlighted in the caption: *Tera inhabibilis per habundantiam aquae* [Land uninhabitable due to the abundance of water]. Its positioning between *Armenia Maior*, *Bitinia*, *Capadocia* and *Pamflogonia* does not help in the identification of this region with any geographical environment bearing these features. However, perhaps we

should seek the pretext for this excess of water and the uninhabitable state of the land in its proximity to the *Earthly Paradise*. The isolation of the *Paradise* was construed to be based on the water from rivers that emanated from it, among other factors, and this is what the *Navarre* map shows.

Of all the Beatus derivative *mappae mundi* only on the *Navarre mappa mundi* do we see the graphic depiction of the desert. It happens to be the *Libia deserta*, envisaged as a

flaming red blotch; the shape of the flame and its color are reminiscent of fire and, consequently, seem to indicate the extreme heat of this region.

For complete toponyms of this map see Konrad Miller's re-drawing of the map as shown below. The numbers in brackets in the following paragraphs refer to those indicated on this re-drawing. The *Navarre mappa mundi* omits Spain and the Gaulish lands, and duplicates the place name *Lycaonia*.

*Paradise* is at the top of the map, where East should be (1), though this is not named. One of the main biblical features of the map are the four rivers of *Paradise*, the *Euphrates*, *Tigris*, *Phison* and *Gihon*, flowing out of *Paradise* into the surrounding ocean. The ocean is named *Mare Magnum*, a name normally reserved for the Mediterranean. The *Earthly Paradise* of the *mappa mundi* of *Navarre* shares many similarities with the *El Burgo de Osma* and *Milan Beatus mappae mundi*, although it also diverges somewhat from them. The perimeter is similarly defined by a rectangle whose interior depicts the paradisiacal spring in a circular shape, within another circle. It is interesting to note that the outer circle, the one which encircles the spring, is colored in red, and this color might allude to the fire of the "flaming sword" which God placed before this garden to guard the way to the tree of life, after the expulsion of Adam and Eve from *Paradise*. In fact in this same map the red color is also used to allude to heat in the depiction of the Libyan desert. From the central spring, four rivers emanate. The main difference between this map and the two previous ones lies in the fact that the first shows the four rivers emerging from the *Earthly Paradise*, in other words, it presents them as earthly rivers which disgorge into the encircling ocean, as is also found in other mediaeval maps, for example, the one of Henry of Mainz (a.k.a. the *Sawley mappa mundi*), ca. 1190 (#215). The *Euphrates*, which curiously has an islet half way along its course, flows towards the east while the three others flow to the south. The act of depicting the waters of *Paradise* conjoining with those of the ocean which encircles the world seems to be a way of solving the difficulty of depicting them as non-paradisiacal rivers. In this manner, after rising in the east, their waters thus arrived at the most distant reaches of the world. In the *Navarre* map, besides the paradisiacal *Gihon* we find the Nile flowing opposite Egypt, although there is no hint of a suggestion that both rivers were linked to each other.

*Armenia Maior* is depicted at the top left corner of the map (2), located in the quarter of the earth that is entitled *Asia* (3). The river *Araxes* (4) is running from the region of *Armenia* into the surrounding oceans (*Mare Magnum*), *Capadocia* (16) and *Bitinia* are two provinces neighboring *Armenia*. No other Caucasian countries are specified. This quarter of the map seems to be the only one which is topographically relatively correct and bears similarities with the other *Beatus* maps as far as province and country placing are concerned.

The world is bisected by the Mediterranean Sea (5), which runs the length of the whole world, between the eastern and western oceans. There is a sea branching off from the Mediterranean towards the left (6) named *Mare Til[eriadis]* (Lake Tiberiades) and divides *Asia* (3) from *Europe* (9a), as opposed to the *River Tanais*. This should be the Aegean/Black Sea/Dardanelles/Bosphorus complex, since *Constantinople* (12) is located at its shores. The river Nile (7) does not mark the border between *Asia* and *Africa* (8), but is shown as a river flowing inside *Africa*. The waterway dividing *Asia* and *Africa* is shown to be the Mediterranean Sea (5). *Africa* itself (8) has been allocated the top right corner of the oval earth surface, which is the smallest quarter of the map. In contrast *Europe* has been allocated the two lower quarters of the map (9a) and (9b), making it by far the largest continent. The body of water shaped like a striped cucumber separating

the two southern quarters of its quadripartite world (*Africa* (8) from *Europe* (9b)) is the Red Sea (10). It should, in fact, have been located between Asia and Africa. This is one of the errors caused by the inaccurate orientation of the map, where the southern and western territories have been marked in a confused manner.



In the left half of Europe (9a) we see *Jerusalem* (11) next to *Constantinople* (12), *Greece* (13) and *Arabia* (14), some of which are quite out of place. The depiction of *Arabia* here reverts to the archetypal turreted castle with a facade of three towers, the central one standing out in breadth and height. The indisputably eye-catching aspect of it is that it portrays, beneath a great semicircular archway, what appears to be the image of an altar topped with an enormous cross. The presence of the place name removes any possible doubt that the image of the city that displays the Christian symbol is Arabia itself, which was not only Muslim at the moment of the map's creation, but the cradle of Islam and the most fervent heartland of the Islamic world. This detail increases in fascination when we

realize that this city is the only one in the entire map that displays any religious emblem at all, whilst Jerusalem or Constantinople, that appear in proximity to it, have none. Faced with this imagery one is forced to ask if it was due to an unfortunate error or if perhaps it was intentional. Perhaps the illuminator was trying to overlook the Islamic presence and show a uniquely Christianized world, converting Arabia into a utopian type of Christian area. And perhaps also for this reason, it is placed in the same four-lobed area as two of the most important cities of Christendom: Jerusalem and Constantinople. On the other hand, it might also be appropriate to interpret this cross as the emblem of "the Sacred land", the byname by which Arabia was known, as derived from the *Etymologiae* (xiv, 3, 15) of St Isidore: "The word 'Arabia' means 'sacred'; it is interpreted to mean this because the region produces incense and perfumes: hence the Greeks called it *eudairnon*, our Latin speakers *beatus*."

Some provinces of Italy such as *Calabria* and *Luca* (15) are shown on the two banks of a river. Crossing the Mediterranean, at the lower right we see *Rome* (17), *Vienna* (18), *Toledo* (19) and *Barcelona* (20). A most curious arrangement.

Above Europe (9b), *Africa* (8) contains the provinces and countries of *Egypt* (21), *Syria* (22), *Palestine* and *Judea* (23), *Damascus* (24), *Ethiopia* (25) and *Mesopotamia* (26) all of them named, including the city of *Alexandria* (27) with a vignette of its famous lighthouse. In fact the continent of Africa should have been more correctly named "Middle East", since this would have made locations of the toponyms more acceptable.

The islands of *Cyprus* (28) and *Crete* (29) are two of the islands in the Mediterranean, which is alive with various fish and forms a single body of water connected to the oceans and seas. One of the islands is named as *Lycaonia* (30), the name

given to an island kingdom to the west of Asia Minor. Another island is named *Achaia* (31), which in fact is the name of a strip of the territory located inland in Greece!

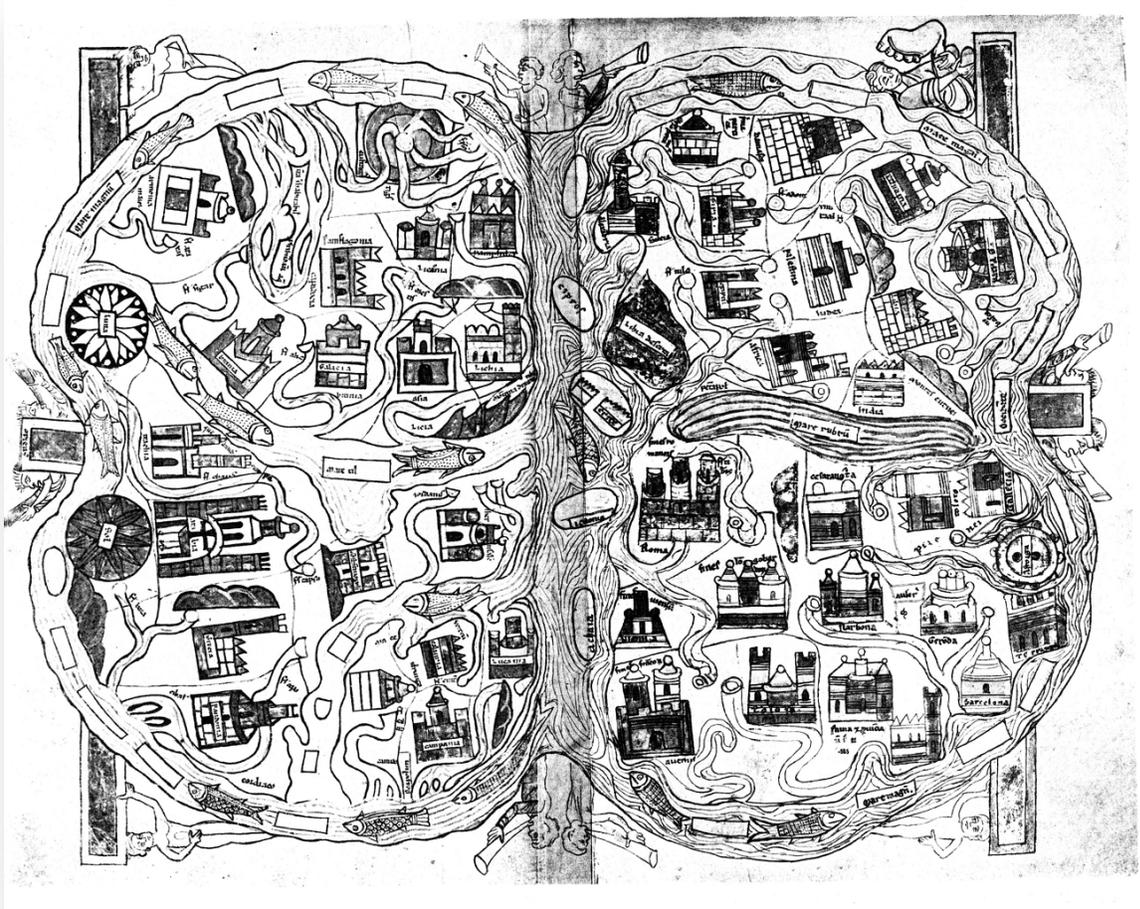
The eccentric *mappamundi* in the so-called *Navarra Beatus* does not show the antipodal continent and does not have a legend about *sciapods* there, but does illustrate a *sciapod* outside the *ecumene*, at the southeastern edge of the world, near Ethiopia, and it seems likely that this *sciapod* alludes to the presence of *sciapods* in Ethiopia.

**Location:** Bibliotheque Nationals de France. Paris. MS na Lat. 1366, ff. 24v-25r.

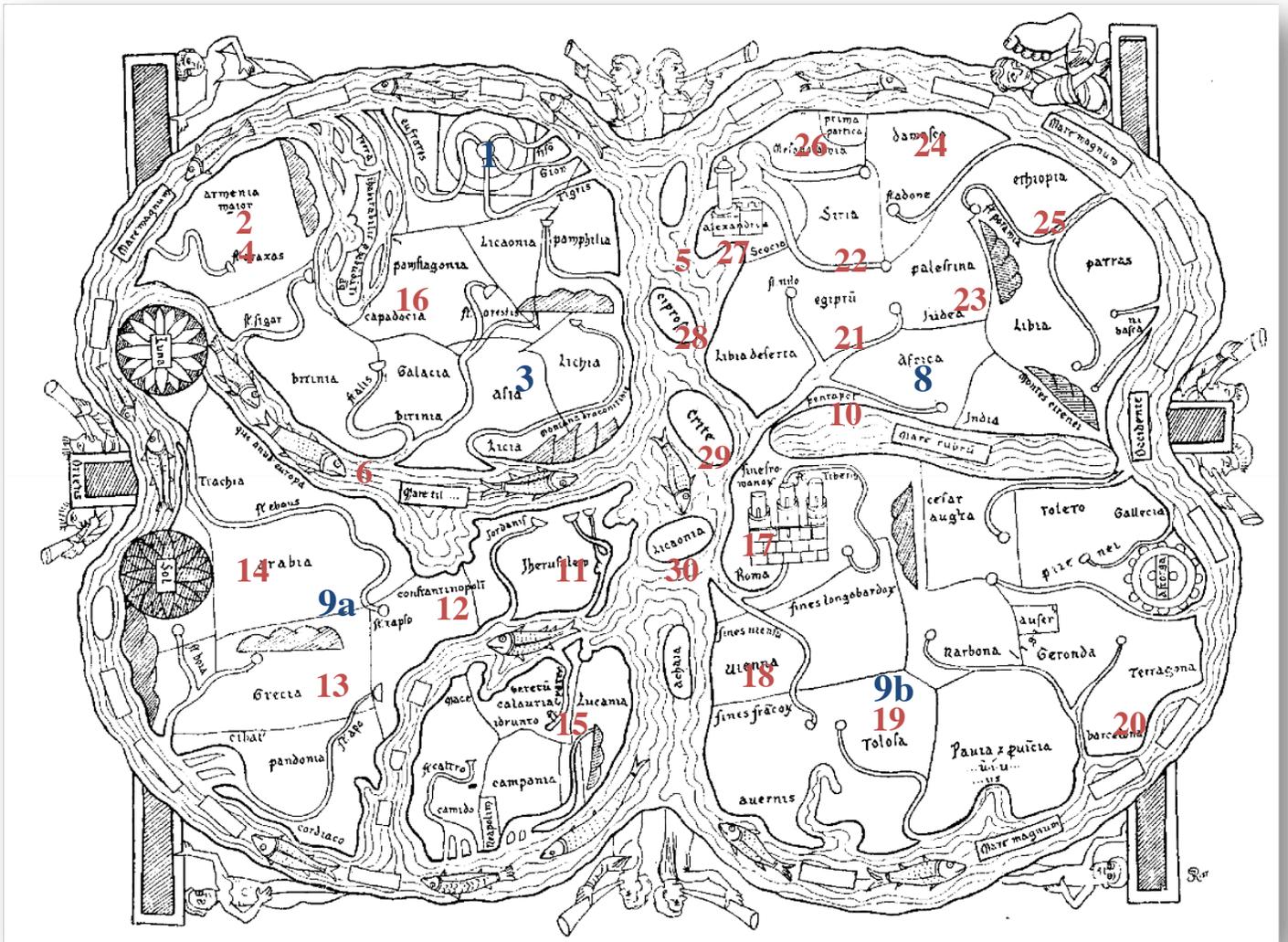
**Size:** approximately 43 x 32 cm.

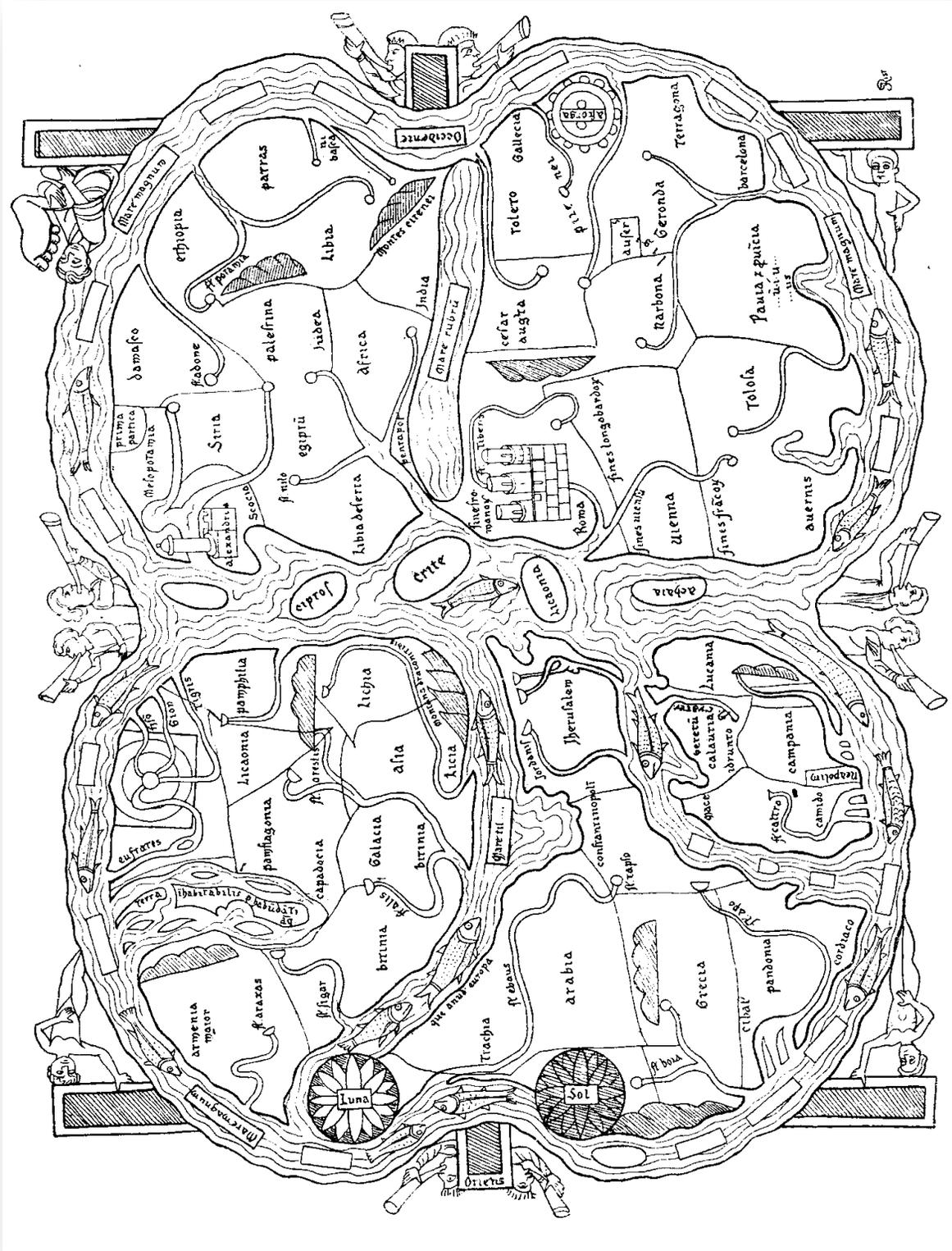
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The Navarra, or Paris II Beatus mappa mundi





The Navarra, or Paris II Beatus mappa mundi



The Navarra, or Paris II Beatus mappa mundi, 43 x 32 cm, 12<sup>th</sup> century  
Bibliothèque Nationales de France, Paris. MS na Lat 1366, ff. 24v-25r